

**EIA-Funded Program Name:**

**\* Current Fiscal Year EIA Allocation to this EIA-Program:**

**\* Name of Person Completing Survey and to whom EOC members may request additional information:**

**\* Telephone number:**

**\* E-mail:**

**History of the program. Please mark the appropriate response (choose one):**This program:

Was an original initiative of the Education Improvement Act of 1984

Was created or implemented as part of the Education Accountability Act of 1998

Has been operational for less than five years

Was funded by last fiscal year by general or other funds.

Is a new program implemented for the first time in the current fiscal year

Other

**What SC laws, including provisos in the current year's general appropriation act, govern the implementation of this program? Provide complete citations from the SC Code of Laws including Title, Chapter, and Section numbers.**

Title 59, Chapter 152

**Code of Laws:(MAX. 100 characters)**

South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness

**Proviso Number:(MAX: 100 characters)**

N/A

**What South Carolina regulations govern the implementation of this program? Provide specific references to the South Carolina Code of Regulations?**

**Regulations:**

N/A

**Do guidelines that have been approved by the State Board of Education, the Commission on higher Education or other governing board exist that govern the implementation of this program?**

Yes

No

**What are the primary objective(s) or goals of this program? Please distinguish between the long-term mission of the program and the current annual objectives of the program. (The goals or objectives should be in terms that can be quantified, evaluated and assessed.) (MAX 3500 characters)**

South Carolina First Steps to School Readiness is a comprehensive, results-oriented initiative for improving early childhood development (Section 59-152-10). First Steps Partnership Boards in each county are charged with developing and/or expanding school readiness strategies based upon locally identified service gaps. Funding is allocated at the discretion of - and within the accountability confines established by - the First Steps State Board of Trustees (as supported by the Office of South Carolina First Steps). First Steps funds multiple school readiness strategies across five broad lines of work: health, parenting and family support, child care, early education, and school transition. Objectives are strategy specific and support the legislative mission of the initiative.

**In the prior fiscal year, what primary program activities or processes were conducted to facilitate the program's performance in reaching the objective(s) as provided in question 7? What, if any, change in processes or activities are planned for the current fiscal year? (Examples of program processes would be: training provided, recruiting efforts made, technical assistance services, monitoring services, etc. Answers should be specific to the process undertaken at the state level to support the objectives of the program and should be quantifiable Please include any professional development services provided.)(MAX: 5000 characters)**

During the prior fiscal year, South Carolina First Steps has funded a myriad of school readiness strategies through 46 seperate county partnerships, including training and technical assistance for child care providers, the provision of early education scholarships, parenting and family literacy services, Countdown to Kindergarten and a large number of others. No change in processes is anticipated for FY08.

**In the prior fiscal year and using the most recent data available, what were the direct products and services (outputs) delivered by this program? (Examples of program outputs would be: number of teachers attending professional development seminars, number of AP exams given and students taking AP classes, number of students served in the program, etc.)(MAX: 5000 characters)**

Due to the complexity and wide range of services funded through the initiative, a comprehensive listing of these outputs is impossible to provide in this format. A published summary report containing this data is published each January and provided to the General Assembly per the First Steps enabling legislation.

**What are the outcomes or results of this program? (Program outcomes can be both quantitative and qualitative and should address the program's objectives. Please use the most recent data available. Examples of outcomes would be: results of surveys, test data, increase in minority participation, reduction in achievement gaps, teacher loans awarded, textbooks purchased, etc.)(MAX: 5000 characters)**

As with outputs, the large number of strategies funded using First Steps EIA dollars - and the agency's initial focus on longitudinal tracking and the age of the young clients involved - combine to make reporting in this format nearly impossible. By law the First Steps initiative is examined every three years by an external evaluator. The most recent evaluation, conducted in 2006, led the agency to implement a host of new, short-term evaluation measures for FY08 that will make some of this outcome data more readily available in the coming year. The agency's next external evaluation will be published in 2009.

**Program Evaluations****What was the date of the last external or internal evaluation of this program?****Has an evaluation been conducted?**

Yes    No

**If an evaluation was conducted, what were the results and primary recommendations of the evaluation?  
(MAX: 2000 characters)**

First Steps is Successfully Targeting the Poorest of the Poor and the Neediest of the Needy. Across the strategies examined (4K, Child Care and Parenting/Family Strengthening), children accessing early interventions through the First Steps initiative were more likely to qualify for Medicaid, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), food stamps and free/reduced-price lunches than their non-First Steps counterparts. First Steps participants were also more likely to be in foster care, be of low birth weight and/or have mothers with less than a high school diploma.

Full-Day Four-Year-Old Kindergarten Reaps Major Dividends. While the report reveals the benefits of both half-day and full-day programs, full-day programs not only enrolled children experiencing more risk factors - but improved academic achievement and significantly reduced rates of kindergarten retention.

First Steps is Helping to Improve Child Care Quality. 35% of providers surveyed increased their ABC scores, levels of licensing or achieved NAEYC accreditation as a result of their First Steps participation. Participating centers overwhelmingly reported high levels of satisfaction with the quality enhancement programs that First Steps subsidizes.

First Steps Has Outgrown its Original Measurement and Client Data Systems. While many of the initiative's participants are still too young to have tracked into the state's educational databases, the researchers strongly validated the initiative's own internal concerns about the utility and consistency of its existing program data - particularly that collected during the first years of implementation. High/Scope now transitions into a consulting role, allowing First Steps to benefit from its expertise and international standing as the initiative works to refine and enhance the state's early childhood data systems.

**Can you provide a URL link, electronic version or hard copy of this evaluation to the Education Oversight Committee?**

Yes

No

**If no, why not?(MAX: 100 characters)**

<http://www.scfirststeps.org/HSEvaluation.htm>

**The following questions do NOT apply to programs having a program code beginning with 01. (These are programs administered by or through the Department of Education. The Office of Finance at the Department of Education will provide answers to these questions.) If your program code begins with 01, please hit the NEXT button below. Once you advance to the next page, hit the SUBMIT button.**

Please mark the appropriate response:

**The total amount of EIA funds requested for this program for the next fiscal year will be:**

The same as appropriated in the current fiscal year's appropriation

An increase over the current fiscal year's appropriation

A decrease over the current fiscal year's appropriation

**If you indicated an increase or decrease in funding for the next fiscal year, what is the total amount requested for this program for the next fiscal year?**

**If you indicated an increase or decrease, please describe the reasons for the increase or decrease. How will the increase or decrease impact the objectives of the program as answered in question 7?(MAX: 3500 characters)**

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**Please fill in the attached charts to reflect the budget for this program in the prior fiscal year and the budget for this program in the current fiscal year.**

Funding Source	Prior FY Actual	Current FY Estimated
EIA		
General Fund		
Lottery		
Fees		
Other Sources		
Grant		
Contributions, Foundation		
Other (Specify)		
Carry Forward from Prior Yr		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

Expenditures	Prior FY Actual	Current FY Estimated
Personal Service		
Contractual Services		
Supplies and Materials		
Fixed Charges		
Travel		
Equipment		
Employer Contributions		
Allocations to Districts/Schools/Agencies/Entities		
Other: Please explain		
Balance Remaining		
<b>TOTAL</b>		
<b>#FTES</b>		

Data entry complete for this year.

**Will additional information (eg. charts, tables, graphs, etc.) be submitted under separate cover to EOC for this program? If so, submit to Melanie Barton at [mbarton@eoc.sc.gov](mailto:mbarton@eoc.sc.gov). The program number should be cited in the subject of the e-mail.**

Yes      No